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“As twisty and suspenseful as it gets!”
— ROBYN HARDING, bestselling author of *The Haters*

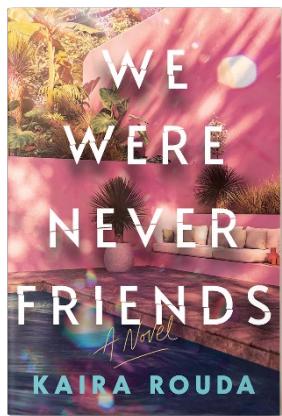
“A fun, clever spin on the revenge thriller and a rollicking good time.”
— KIMBERLY BELLE, *USA Today* bestselling and Edgar Award winning
author of *The Paris Widow*

WE WERE NEVER FRIENDS

by Kaira Rouda

PUBLISHES IN TRADE PAPERBACK FEBRUARY 3, 2026

Sisters? Forever. Friends? NEVER.
Who knew a reunion weekend could be so deadly?



Beneath designer outfits and practiced smiles lie secrets that refuse to die in *USA Today* bestselling author Kaira Rouda's **WE WERE NEVER FRIENDS** (on sale February 3; 9781464244995; Trade Paperback Original; Poisoned Pen Press), a powder keg, high society thriller about four sorority sisters who reunite in Palm Springs despite what happened twenty-five years ago to celebrate what should have been a joyous occasion.

They've been summoned to Roxy's luxurious vacation home to celebrate the engagement of her son to Beth's daughter. But the painstakingly refurbished midcentury estate is eerily reminiscent of the hotel where tragedy struck during Spring Break where six sisters became five. Long-simmering tensions and shocking secrets begin bubbling to the surface like bodies—because while the weekend was supposed to be about celebrating the future, it's not so easy to bury the past...

WE WERE NEVER FRIENDS is a thrilling toxic brew where five sisters vying for main character status will



bring the house down in an unputdownable, riveting train wreck full of dark humor and bad behavior perfect for fans of Shari Lapena, Mary Kubica, and B. A. Paris.

Meet the sorority sisters of Theta Gamma Mu:

- Roxy Callahan Gentry, the ruthless former sorority president and current hostess who has painstakingly choreographed every detail of this weekend—even matching the cocktails to her couture—to prove that she remains their undisputed queen
- Amelia Dell, the widow drenched in old money and alcohol, with her big pot-stirring spoon and uninvited boy-toy in tow
- Jamie Vale, the double-legacy pledge, straight-A student with no sparkle, now a top cardiologist with a picture-perfect family—and a well-guarded bad habit
- Beth Harrison, the scholarship student who never quite fit in and was only admitted because her best friend Sunny insisted that the two were a package deal
- Sunny Spencer, the carefree and beloved friend to all, or so it seemed—until she wasn't

PRAISE FOR WE WERE NEVER FRIENDS

SHEREADS MOST ANTICIPATED MYSTERY THRILLERS 2026

"A reunion goes horribly and thrillingly wrong...this fast-paced, entertaining read will delight fans of May Cobb and Jeneva Rose." —Library Journal

"As twisty and suspenseful as it gets...instead of looking to the future, these old friends and sorority sisters discover it's not so easy to bury the past. A haunting page-turner. I loved it!"

— Robyn Harding, bestselling author of *The Haters*

"Mix one-part ruthless college frenemies out for vengeance with another part juicy scandal not-so-deeply buried in the past, then shake it up with messed-up family dynamics and Rouda's trademark dark humor, and you get the heady cocktail. A fun, clever spin on the revenge thriller and a rollicking good time."

— Kimberly Belle, *USA Today* and internationally bestselling author of *The Paris Widow*

"A reunion goes horribly and thrillingly wrong...this fast-paced, entertaining read will delight fans of May Cobb and Jeneva Rose."

—Library Journal

"Nothing about these 'sisters' is what it seems, and all have their own stories about the night that Sunny died...*Mean Girls* has nothing on *We Were Never Friends*." — First Clue

"Lush descriptions, outrageous characters, and corkscrew twists make this a deliciously fun read."



— Sarah Pekkanen, *New York Times* bestselling author

"We Were Never Friends is a wicked blend of long-held secrets, backstabbing frenemies, a gorgeous estate, and a relentless dust storm — the perfect backdrop for murder in this riveting, heart-pounding thrill ride from a writer who delivers every single time. **Settle in because you'll only stop reading to catch your breath.** Join Theta Gamma Mu for a party that will chill you to the bone, leave you looking over your shoulder, and sleeping with one eye open."

— Heather Gudenkauf, *NYT* bestselling author of *The Overnight Guest* and *Everyone Is Watching*

"Secrets and betrayals abound in this twisty tale of a sorority reunion gone very, very wrong. **We Were Never Friends is a delightfully juicy reminder that dark secrets can lurk behind even the glossiest of exteriors."**

—Kathleen Barber, author of *Sisterhood Above All*

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



KAIRA ROUDA is the *USA Today* bestselling and award-winning author of contemporary fiction exploring what goes on beneath the surface of seemingly perfect lives. Her latest, *Jill is Not Happy*, is *USA Today* bestseller and has been named a 2025 Most Anticipated Book by Zibby Media. Her next novel, *We Were Never Friends*, is set to publish in February of 2026. Her novels have been translated into more than a dozen languages, and have been selected by Library Reads, Amazon and Apple Books Editors as Best Books of the Month and Strand Magazine's Best Book of the Year. She lives in Southern California with her family.

We Were Never Friends by Kaira Rouda

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